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February 5, 2010

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
U.S. House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4902

Via Telecopy

Dear Representative Baldwin:

Cooperative Network is providing you with a *Biomass to Energy Pilot Project* appropriations request that will greatly benefit the farmers of the Second Congressional District of Wisconsin, along with farmers across our state and in the state of Minnesota. Our request would provide financial support for the pilot development of locally owned biomass aggregation systems for energy production. Furthermore, our request would help develop additional cooperative businesses, create new green jobs in the state, increase our energy security, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Our *Biomass to Energy Pilot Project* appropriations request reflects a multi-state effort to develop a biomass procurement, aggregation, processing, storage, and transportation system. This system will supply locally-sourced, sustainably harvested renewable fuels for energy generation. For example, we have been working closely with Premier Cooperative in Mount Horeb to develop on-farm sources of biomass in Dane and Green counties for the potential supply of the state's Charter Street Power Plant, as well as for the generation of power by private utilities such as Alliant Energy. Premier Cooperative would act as the aggregator of the biomass, as well as the processor, storer and transporter of the processed biomass to an energy generation facility. Premier Cooperative is in a unique position to do this because of the close and long standing business relationship it has with thousands of agricultural producers in the Second Congressional District. This is an innovative project and could well serve as a national model.

We are submitting the attached appropriations request for fiscal year 2010 to support this and other biomass activities. The cooperative system has already invested significant dollars in this area. However, we collectively do not have the resources to do this on our own.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William L. Oemichen".

William L. Oemichen
President and CEO

Attachment